The Perpetuity of the Law of God

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AT THE METROPOLITAN TABERNACLE, NEWINGTON.

"For verily I say unto you, Till Heaven and earth pass, one jot or one tittle shall in no wise pass from the Law till all is fulfilled." Matthew 5:18.

IT has been said that he who understands the two Covenants is a theologian and this is, no doubt, true. I may also say that the man who knows the relative positions of the Law and of the Gospel has the keys of the situation in the matter of doctrine. The relationship of the Law to myself and how it condemns me—the relationship of the Gospel to myself and how, if I am a Believer, it justifies me—these are two points which every Christian man should clearly understand. He should not "see men as trees walking" in this department, or else he may cause himself great sorrow and fall into errors which will be grievous to his heart and injurious to his life. To form a mingle-mangle of Law and Gospel is to teach that which is neither Law nor Gospel, but the opposite of both. May the Spirit of God be our teacher and the Word of God be our lesson book—and then we shall not err.

Very great mistakes have been made about the Law. Not long ago there were those about us who affirmed that the Law is utterly abrogated and abolished. They openly taught that Believers were not bound to make the moral Law the rule of their lives. What would have been sin in other men they counted not to be sin in themselves. From such Antinomi-anism as that, may God deliver us! We are not under the Law as the method of salvation, but we delight to see the Law in the hand of Christ and desire to obey the Lord in all things. Others have been met with who have taught that Jesus mitigated and softened down the Law and they have, in effect, said that the perfect Law of God was too hard for imperfect beings and, therefore, God has given us a milder and easier rule. These tread dangerously upon the verge of terrible error, although we believe that they are little aware of it.

Alas, we have met with authors who have gone much further than this and have railed at the Law. Oh, the hard words that I have sometimes read against the holy Law of God! How very unlike those which the Apostle used when he said, "The Law is holy, and the commandment holy, and just, and good." How different from the reverent spirit which made him say— "I delight in the Law of God after the inward man." You know how David loved the Law of God and sang its praises all through the longest of the Psalms. The heart of every real Christian is most reverent towards the Law of the Lord. It is perfect, no, it is perfection itself! We believe that we shall never have reached perfection till we are perfectly conformed to it. A sanctification which stops short of perfect conformity to the Law cannot

truthfully be called perfect sanctification, for every lack of exact conformity to the perfect Law is sin.

May the Spirit of God help us while, in imitation of our Lord Jesus, we endeavor to magnify the Law. I gather from our text two things upon which I shall speak at this time. The first is that the Law of God is perpetual—"Till Heaven and earth pass, one jot or one tittle shall in no wise pass from the Law." The meaning is that even in the least point it must abide till it is all fulfilled. Secondly, we perceive that the Law of God must be fulfilled—Not "one jot or one tittle shall pass from the Law, till all IS fulfilled." He who came to bring in the Gospel dispensation here asserts that He has not come to destroy the Law, but to fulfill it.

I. First—THE LAW OF GOD MUST BE PERPETUAL. There is no abrogation of it, nor amendment of it. It is not to be toned down or adjusted to our fallen condition, but every one of the Lord's righteous judgments abides forever. I would urge three reasons which will establish this teaching. In the first place our Lord Jesus declares that He did not come to abolish it. His words are most exact—"Think not that I am come to destroy the Law, or the prophets: I am not come to destroy, but to fulfill." And Paul tells us with regard to the Gospel, "Do we then make void the Law through faith? God forbid: yes, we establish the Law" (Rom. 3:31). The Gospel is the means of the firm establishment and vindication of the Law of God. Jesus did not come to change the Law, but He came to explain it, and that very fact shows that it remains, for there is no need to explain that which is abrogated.

Upon one particular point in which there happened to be a little ceremonialism involved, namely, the keeping of the Sabbath, our Lord enlarged and showed that the Jewish idea was not the true one. The Pharisees forbade even the doing

of works of necessity and mercy, such as rubbing ears of corn to satisfy hunger and healing the sick. Our Lord Jesus showed that it was not at all according to the mind of God to forbid these things. In straining over the letter and carrying an outward observance to excess, they had missed the spirit of the Sabbath Law, which suggested works of piety such as truly hallow the day. He showed that Sabbatic rest was not mere inaction, and He said, "My Father works hitherto, and I work." He pointed to the priests who labored hard at offering sacrifices and said of them, "the priests in the Temple profane the Sabbath and are blameless." They were doing Divine service and were within the Law.

To meet the popular error, He took care to do some of His greatest miracles upon the Sabbath—and though this excited great wrath against Him, as though He were a Law-breaker, yet He did it on purpose that they might see that the Sabbath was made for man and not man for the Sabbath—and that it is meant to be a day for doing that which honors God and blesses men! O that men knew how to keep the spiritual Sabbath by an easing from all servile work and from all work done for self! The rest of faith is the true Sabbath and the

service of God is the most acceptable hallowing of the day. Oh that the day were wholly spent in serving God and doing good!

The sum of our Lord's teaching was that works of necessity, works of mercy and works of piety are lawful on the Sabbath. He explained the Law in that point and in others, yet that explanation did not alter the command, but only removed the rust of tradition which had settled upon it. By thus explaining the Law, He confirmed it! He could not have meant to abolish it or He would not have needed to expound it. In addition to explaining it, the Master went further— He pointed out its spiritual character. This the Jews had not observed. They thought, for instance, that the command "You shall not kill" simply forbade murder and manslaughter. But the Savior showed that anger without cause violates the Law of God and that hard words and cursing—and all other displays of enmity and malice—are forbidden by the Commandment.

They knew that they might not commit adultery, but it did not enter into their minds that a lascivious desire would be an offense against the precept till the Savior said, "He that looks upon a woman to lust after her commits adultery with her already in his heart." He showed that the thought of evil is sin; that an unclean imagination pollutes the heart; that a wanton wish is guilt in the eyes of the Most High! Assuredly this was no abrogation of the Law of God—it was a wonderful exhibition of its far-reaching sovereignty and of its searching character! The Pharisees fancied that if they kept their hands, their feet and their tongues, all was done. But Jesus showed that thought, imagination, desire, memory—everything—must be brought into subjection to the will of God or else the Law was not fulfilled.

What a searching and humbling doctrine is this! If the Law of the Lord reaches to the inward parts, who among us can, by nature, abide its judgment? Who can understand his errors? Cleanse me from secret faults! The Ten Commandments are full of meaning—meaning which many seem to ignore. For instance, many a man will allow in and around his house inattention to the rules of health and sanitary precaution, but it does not occur to him that he is trampling on the commandments—"You shall not kill." Yet this rule forbids our doing anything which may cause injury to our neighbor's health and so deprive him of life. Many a deadly manufactured article; many an ill-ventilated shop; many a business with hours of excessive length is a standing breach of this Commandment!

Shall I say less of drinks, which lead so speedily to disease and death and crowd our cemeteries with untimely graves? So, too, in reference to another precept—some persons will repeat songs and stories which are suggestive of unclean-ness—I wish that this were not so common as it is. Do they not know that an unchaste word, a double meaning, a sly hint of lust all come under the Commandment, "You shall not commit adultery"? It is so according to the teaching of our Lord Jesus! Oh, talk not to me about our Lord's having brought in a milder Law because man could not keep the Decalogue, for He has done

nothing of the kind! "His fan is in His hand, and He will thoroughly purge His floor." "Who may abide the day of His coming? For He is like a refiner's fire and like fullers' soap."

Let us not dare to dream that God had given us a perfect Law which we poor creatures could not keep and that, therefore, He has corrected His legislature and sent His Son to put us under a relaxed discipline! Nothing of the sort! The Lord Jesus Christ has, on the contrary, shown how intimately the Law of God surrounds and enters into our inward parts, so as to convict us of sin within even if we seem clean on the outside. Ah me, this Law is high! I cannot attain to it! It surrounds me everywhere; it tracks me to my bed and my board; it follows my steps and marks my ways wherever I may be! No moment does it cease to govern and demand obedience. O God, I am everywhere condemned, for everywhere Your Law reveals to me my serious deviations from the way of righteousness and shows me how far short I come of Your Glory. Have pity on Your servant, for I fly to the Gospel which has done for me what the Law could never do—

"To see the Law by Christ fulfilled, And hear His pardoning voice,
Changes a slave into a child, And duty into choice.'

Our Lord Jesus Christ, in addition to explaining the Law and pointing out its spiritual character, also unveiled its living essence, for when one asked Him "Which is the great Commandment in the Law?" He said, "You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your mind. This is the first and great Commandment. And the second is like unto it; You shall love your neighbor as yourself. On these two Commandments hang all the Law and the prophets." In other words, He has told us, "All the Law is fulfilled in this—you shall love." There is the pith and marrow of it! Does any man say to me, "You see, then, instead of the Ten Commandments, we have received the two commandments and these are much easier." I answer that this reading of the Law of God is not in the least easier!

Such a remark implies a lack of thought and experience. Those two precepts comprehend the 10 at their fullest extent and cannot be regarded as the erasure of a jot or tittle of them. Whatever difficulties surround the Ten Commandments, are equally found in the two, which are their sum and substance. If you love God with all your heart, you must keep the first table—and if you love your neighbor as yourself you must keep the second table. If any suppose that the Law of Love is an adaptation of the moral Law to man's fallen condition, they greatly err. I can only say that the supposed adaptation is no more adapted to us than the original Law. If there could be conceived to be any difference in difficulty, it might be easier to keep the 10 than the two, for if we go no deeper than the letter, the two are the more exacting, since they deal with the heart, soul and mind.

The Ten Commandments mean all that the two express. But if we forget this and only look at the wording of them, I say, it is harder for a man to love God with all his heart, with all his soul, with all his mind, with all his strength and his neighbor as himself than it would

be merely to abstain from killing, stealing and false witness. Christ has not, therefore, abrogated or at all moderated the Law to meet our helplessness. He has left it in all its sublime perfection, as it always must be left—and He has pointed out how deep are its foundations, how elevated are its heights, how measureless are its length and breadth! Like the laws of the Medes and Persians, God's commands cannot be altered!

We are saved by another method. To show that He never meant to abrogate the Law, our Lord Jesus has embodied all its Commandments in His own life. In His own Person there was a nature which was perfectly conformed to the Law of God—and as was His nature, such was His life. He could say, "Which of you convicts Me of sin?" And again, "I have kept My Father's commandments and abide in His love." I may not say that He was scrupulously careful to keep the Law of God—I will not put it so, for there was no tendency in Him to do otherwise—He was so perfect and pure; so infinitely good and so complete in His agreement and communion with the Father, that He, in all things, carried out the Father's will.

The Father said of Him, "This is My beloved Son in whom I am well pleased; hear you Him." Point out, if you possibly can, any way in which Christ has violated the Law or left it unfulfilled! There was never an unclean thought or rebellious desire in His soul. He had nothing to regret or to retract—it could not be that He should err. He was thrice tempted in the wilderness and the enemy had the impertinence, even, to suggest idolatry, but He instantly overthrew the adversary. The prince of this world came to Him, but he found nothing in Him—

"My dear Redeemer and my Lord,
I read my duty in Your Word.
But in Your life the Law appears
Drawn out in living characters." Now, if that Law had been too high and too hard, Christ would not have exhibited it in His life. But as our Exemplar He would have set forth that milder form of Law which is supposed by some theologians. He came to introduce. Inasmuch as our Leader and Exemplar has exhibited to us in His life a perfect obedience to the sacred Commandments in their undi-minished grandeur, I gather that He means it to be the model of our conversation.

Our Lord has not taken off a single point or pinnacle from that up-towering alp of perfection. He said at the first, "Lo, I come: in the volume of the Book it is written of Me. I delight to do Your will, O My God; yes, Your Law is within My heart." And well has He justified the writing of the volume of the Book. "God sent forth His Son, made of a woman, made under the Law" and, being for our sakes under the Law, He obeyed it to the fullest, so that now, "Christ is the end of the Law for righteousness to everyone that believes."

Once more, that the Master did not come to alter the Law of God is clear because after having embodied it in His life, He willingly gave Himself up to bear its penalty, though He

had never broken it, bearing the penalty for us, even as it is written, "Christ has redeemed us from the curse of the Law, being made a curse for us." "All we like sheep have gone

astray, we have turned, everyone, to his own way, and the Lord has laid on Him the iniquity of us all." If the Law had demanded more of us than it ought to have done, would the Lord Jesus have rendered to it the penalty which resulted from its too severe demands? I am sure He would not! But because the Law asked only what it ought to ask—namely perfect obedience and exacted of the transgressor only what it ought to exact, namely, death, as the penalty for sin—death under Divine wrath, therefore the Savior went to the Cross and there bore our sins and purged them once and for all.

He was crushed beneath the load of our guilt and cried, "My soul is exceedingly sorrowful, even unto death," and at last, when He had borne—

"All that Incarnate God could bear,

With strength enough, but none to spare," He bowed His head and said, "It is finished." Our Lord Jesus Christ gave a greater vindication to the Law of God by dying, because it had been broken, than all the lost in Hell can ever give by their miseries, for their suffering is never complete, their debt is never paid! But He has borne all that was due from His people and the Law is defrauded of nothing. By His death He has vindicated the honor of God's moral government and made it just for Him to be merciful! When the Lawgiver, Himself, submits to the Law; when the Sovereign, Himself, bears the extreme penalty of that Law—then is the justice of God set upon such a glorious high throne that all admiring worlds must wonder at it! If, therefore, it is clearly proven that Jesus was obedient to the Law of God, even to the extent of death, He certainly did not come to abolish or abrogate it! And if He did not remove it, who can do so? If He declares that He came to establish it, who shall overthrow

it?

But, secondly, the Law of God must be perpetual from its very nature, for does it not strike you, the moment you think of it, that right must always be right, truth must always be true, and purity must always be pure? Before the Ten Commandments were published at Sinai, there was still that same Law of right and wrong laid upon men by the necessity of their being God's creatures. Right was always right before a single command had been committed to words! When Adam was in the garden it was always right that he should love his Maker and it would always have been wrong that he should have been at cross-purposes with his God. And it does not matter what happens in this world, or what changes take place in the universe, it never can be right to lie, or to commit adultery, or murder, or steal, or to worship an idol god. I will not say that the principles of right and wrong are as absolutely self-existent as God, but I do say that I cannot grasp the idea of God, Himself, as existing apart from His being always holy and always true—so that the very idea of right and wrong seems to me to be necessarily permanent and cannot possibly be shifted.

You cannot bring right down to a lower level! It must be where it always is—right is right eternally—and cannot be wrong. You cannot lift up wrong and make it somewhat right—it must be wrong while the world stands. Heaven and earth may pass away, but not the smallest letter or accent of the moral Law can possibly change. In spirit the Law is eternal. Suppose for a moment that it were possible to temper and tone down the Law of God, where would it be? I confess I do not know and cannot imagine! If it is perfectly holy, how can it be altered except by being made imperfect? Would you wish for that? Could you worship the God of an imperfect Law? Can it ever be true that God, by way of favoring us, has put us under an imperfect Law? Would that be a blessing or a curse?

It is said by some that man cannot keep a perfect Law and God does not demand that he should. Certain modern theologians have taught this, I hope, by inadvertence. Has God issued an imperfect Law? It is the first imperfect thing I ever heard of His making! Does it come to this that, after all, the Gospel is a proclamation that God is going to be satisfied with obedience to a mutilated Law? God forbid! I say, better that we perish than that His perfect Law perish! Terrible as it is, it lies at the foundation of the peace of the universe and must be honored at all hazards. That gone, all goes! When the power of the Holy Spirit convinced me of sin, I felt such a solemn awe of the Law of God that I remember well, when I lay crashed beneath it as a condemned sinner, I yet admired and glorified it. I could not have wished that perfect Law to be altered for me.

Rather did I feel that if my soul were sent to the lowest Hell, yet God was to be extolled for His Justice and His Law held in honor for its perfectness. I would not have had it altered even to save my soul! Brethren, the Law of the Lord must stand, for it is perfect and, therefore, has in it no element of decay or change. The Law of God is no more than God might most righteously ask of us. If God were about to give us a more tolerant Law, it would be an admission, on His part, that He asked too much at first. Can that be supposed? Was there, after all, some justification for the statement of the wicked and slothful servant when he said, "I feared you, because you are an austere man"? It cannot be! For God to alter His Law would be an admission that He made a mistake! That He put poor imperfect man (we are often hearing that said) under too rigorous a regime and, therefore, He is now prepared to abate His claims and make them more reasonable.

It has been said that man's moral inability to keep the perfect Law exempts him from the duty of doing so. This is very specious, but it is utterly false! Man's inability is not of the kind which removes responsibility—it is moral, not physical! Never fall into the error that moral inability will be an excuse for sin! What? When a man becomes such a liar that he cannot speak the truth—is he, therefore, exempted from the duty of truthfulness? If your servant owes you a day's labor, is he free from the duty because he has made himself so drunk that he cannot serve you? Is a man freed from a debt by the fact that he has squandered the money and, therefore, cannot pay it? Is a lustful man free to indulge his passions because

he cannot understand the beauty of chastity? This is dangerous doctrine! The Law is a just one and man is bound by it though his sin has rendered him incapable of doing so.

The Law, moreover, demands no more than is good for us. There is not a single Commandment of God's Law but what is meant to be a kind of danger signal such as we put up upon the ice when it is too thin to bear. Each Commandment does, as it were, say to us, "Dangerous!" It is never for a man's good to do what God forbids him! It is never for man's real and ultimate happiness to leave undone anything that God commands him. The wisest directions for spiritual health and for the avoidance of evil are those directions which are given us concerning right and wrong in the Law of God! Therefore it is not possible that there should be any alteration, for it would not be for our good. I should like to say to any Brother who thinks that God has put us under an altered rule—"Which particular part of the Law is it that God has relaxed?" Which precept do you feel free to break?

Are you delivered from the Commandment which forbids stealing? My dear Sir, you may be a capital theologian, but I should lock up my spoons when you call at my house! Is it the Commandment about adultery which you think is removed? Then I could not recommend your being admitted into any decent society! Is the Law as to killing softened down? Then I had rather have your room than your company. From which Law is it that God has exempted you? That Law of worshipping Him, only? Do you propose to have another god? Do you intend to make engraved images? The fact is, that when we come to details, we cannot afford to lose a single link of this wonderful golden chain which is perfect in every part as well as perfect as a whole! The Law is absolutely complete and you can neither add to it nor take from it. "Whoever shall keep the whole Law, and yet offend in one point, he is guilty of all. For He that said, Do not commit adultery, said also, Do not kill. Now if you commit no adultery, yet if you kill, you have become a transgressor of the Law." If, then, no part of it can be taken down, it must stand and stand forever!

A third reason I will give why the Law must be perpetual is that to suppose it altered is most dangerous. To take away from the Law its perpetuity is, first of all, to take away from it its power to convict of sin. Is it so, that I, being an imperfect creature, am not expected to keep a perfect Law? Then it follows that I do not sin when I break the Law! And if all that is required of me is that I am to do according to the best of my knowledge and ability, then I have a very convenient rule, indeed—and most men will take care to adjust it so as to give themselves as much latitude as possible! By removing the Law you have done away with sin, for sin is the transgression of the Law! And where there is no Law, there is no transgression! When you have done away with sin, you may as well have done away with the Savior and with salva-tion—for they are by no means necessary!

When you have reduced sin to a minimum, what need is there of that great and glorious salvation which Jesus Christ has come to bring into the world? Brothers and Sisters, we must have none of this! It is evidently a way of mischief. By lowering the Law, you weaken its

power in the hands of God as a Convincer of sin. "By the Law is the knowledge of sin." It is the looking glass which shows us our spots—and that is a most useful thing—though nothing but the Gospel can wash them away—

"My hopes of Hea ven were firm and bright, But since the precept came
With a convincing power and light,
I find how vile I am.
My guilt appeared but small before,
Till terribly I saw
How perfect, holy, just and pure
Was Your eternal Law.

Then felt my soul the heavy load, My sins revived again, I had provoked a dreadful God, And all my hopes were slain."

It is only a pure and perfect Law that the Holy Spirit can use in order to show us our depravity and sinfulness. Lower the Law and you dim the Law of God by which man perceives his guilt! This is a very serious loss to the sinner rather than a gain, for it lessens the likelihood of his conviction and conversion.

You have also taken away from the Law its power to shut us up to the faith of Christ. What is the Law of God for? For us to keep in order to be saved by it? Not at all! It is sent in order to show us that we cannot be saved by works and to shut us up to be saved by Grace! But if you make out that the Law is altered so that a man can keep it, you have left him his old legal hope and he is sure to cling to it! You need a perfect Law that shuts man right up to hopelessness apart from Jesus—puts him into an iron cage and locks him up—and offers him no escape but by faith in Jesus! Then he begins to cry, "Lord, save me by Grace, for I perceive that I cannot be saved by my own works."

This is how Paul describes it to the Galatians—"The Scripture has concluded all are under sin, that the promise by faith in Jesus Christ might be given to them that believe. But before faith came, we were kept under the Law, shut up unto the faith which should afterwards be revealed. Therefore the Law was our schoolmaster to bring us unto Christ, that we might be justified by faith." I say you have deprived the Gospel of its most able auxiliary when you have set aside the Law! You have taken away from it the schoolmaster that is to bring men to Christ. No, it must stand and stand in all its terrors to drive men away from self-righteousness and constrain them to fly to Christ! They will never accept Grace till they tremble before a just and holy Law! Therefore the Law serves a most necessary and blessed purpose and it must not be removed from its place.

To alter the Law is to leave us without any Law at all. A sliding scale of duty is an immoral invention, fatal to the principles of law. If each man is to be accepted because he does his best, we are all doing our best. Is there anybody that is not? If we take their words for it, all our fellow men are doing as well as they can, considering their imperfect natures. Even

the harlot in the streets has some righteousness— she is not quite so far gone as others. Have you ever heard of the bandit who committed many murders, but who felt that he had been doing his best because he never killed anybody on a Friday? Self-righteousness builds itself a nest, even in the worst character! This is the man's talk— "Really, if you knew me, you would say I have been a good fellow to do as well as I have. Consider what a poor, fallen creature I am! Consider what strong passions were born in me! Consider what temptations to vice beset me and you will not blame me so much! After all, I dare say God is as satisfied with me as with many who are a great deal better because I had so few advantages."

Yes, you have shifted the standard and every man will now do that which is right in his own eyes and claim to be doing his best! If you shift the standard pound weight or the bushel measure, you will certainly never get full weight or measurement again! There will be no standard to go by and each man will do his best with his own pounds and bushels. If the standard is tampered with, you have taken away the foundation upon which trade is conducted and it is the same in soul matters—abolish the best rule that ever can be, even God's own Law—and there is no rule left worthy of the name! What a fine opening this leaves for vain-glory! No wonder that men talk of perfect sanctification if the Law has been lowered! There is nothing at all remarkable in our getting up to the rule if it is conveniently lowered for us! I believe I shall be perfectly sanctified when I keep God's Law without omission or transgression, but not till then!

If any man says that he is perfectly sanctified because he has come up to a modified law of his own, I am glad to know what he means, for I have, no longer, any discussion with him! I see nothing wonderful in his attainment. Sin is my need of conformity to the Law of God—and until we are perfectly conformed to that Law of God in all its spiritual length and breadth—it is idle for us to talk about perfect sanctification! No man is perfectly clean till he accepts absolute purity as the standard by which he is to be judged. So long as there is in us any coming short of the perfect Law, we are not perfect! What a humbling Truth of God this is! The Law shall not pass away, but it must be fulfilled! This Truth must be maintained, for if it goes, our tackling is loose; we cannot well strengthen the mast; the ship goes all to pieces; she becomes a total wreck!

The Gospel itself would be destroyed could you destroy the Law of God! To tamper with the Law is to trifle with the Gospel. "Till Heaven and earth pass, one jot or one tittle shall in no wise pass from the Law, till all is fulfilled."

II. I come to show, secondly, that THE LAW MUST BE FULFILLED. I hope there are some in this place who are saying, "We cannot fulfill it." That is exactly where I want to bring you! Salvation by the works of the Law must be felt to be impossible by every man who would be saved! We must learn that salvation is of Grace through faith in Jesus Christ our Lord—not by our own doings or feelings. But this is a doctrine no one will receive till

he has learned the previous Truth of God—that salvation by the works of the Law can never come to any man born of woman!

Yet the Law must be fulfilled. Many will say with Nicodemus, "How can these things be?" I answer, the Law is fulfilled in Christ and, by faith, we receive the fruit thereof. First, as I have already said, the Law is fulfilled in the matchless Sacrifice of Jesus Christ. If a man has broken a Law, what does the Law do with him? It says, "I must be honored. You have broken my command which was sanctioned by the penalty of death. Inasmuch as you did not honor me by obedience, but dishonored me by transgression, you must die." Our Lord Jesus Christ, who is the great Covenant Representative of His people, their second Adam, stood forward on the behalf of all who are in Him and presented Himself as a victim to Divine Justice.

Since His people were guilty of death, He, as their Covenant Head, came under death in their place! It was a glorious thing that such representative death was possible—and it was only so because of the original constitution of the race as springing from a common father and placed under a single head. Inasmuch as our fall was by one Adam, it was possible for us to be raised by another Adam! "As in Adam all died, even so in Christ shall all be made alive." It became possible for God, upon the principle of representation, to allow substitution. Our first fall was not by our personal fault, but through the failure of our representative—and now in comes our second and grander Representative—the Son of God, and He sets us free, not by our honoring the Law, but by His doing so!

He came under the Law by His birth. And being found as a Man loaded with the guilt of all His people, He was visited with its penalty! The Law lifts its bloody axe and it smites our glorious Head that we may go free! It is the Son of God that keeps the Law by dying, the Just for the unjust. "The soul that sins, it shall die"—there is death demanded— and in Christ death is presented! Life for life is rendered! An infinitely precious Life instead of the poor lives of men! Jesus has died and so the Law has been fulfilled by the endurance of its penalty. And being fulfilled, its power to condemn and punish the Believer has passed away.

Secondly, the Law has been fulfilled, again, for us by Christ in His life. I have already gone over this, but I want to establish you in it. Jesus Christ as our Head and Representative, came into the world for the double purpose of bearing the penalty and, at the same time, keeping the Law. One of His main designs in coming to earth was "to bring in perfect righteousness." "As by the disobedience of one, many were made sinners, so by the righteousness of one, shall many be made righteous." The Law requires a perfect life and he that believes in Jesus Christ presents to the Law a perfect life which he has made his own by faith. It is not his own life, but Christ is made of God unto us, righteousness, even to us who are one with Him. "Christ is the end of the Law for righteousness to everyone that believes."

That which Jesus did is counted as though we did it! And because He was righteous, God sees us in Him and counts us righteous upon the principle of substitution and repres-

entation. Oh, how blessed it is to put on this robe and to wear it! And to stand before the Most High in a better righteousness than His Law demanded—for that demanded the perfect righteousness of a creature—but we put on the absolute righteousness of the Creator Himself! And what can the Law ask more? It is written, "In His days Judah shall be saved, and Israel shall dwell safely, and this is the name with which He shall be called—THE LORD OUR RIGHTEOUSNESS." "The Lord is well pleased for His righteousness' sake: He will magnify the Law and make it honorable."

Yes, but that is not all. The Law has to be fulfilled in us personally in a spiritual and Gospel sense. "Well," you say, "but how can that be?" I reply in the words of our Apostle—"What the Law could not do, in that it was weak through the flesh," Christ has done and is doing by the Holy Spirit, "that the righteousness of the Law might be fulfilled in us who walk not after the flesh but after the Spirit." Regeneration is a work by which the Law is fulfilled, for when a man is born again there is placed in him a new nature which loves the Law of God and is perfectly conformed to it. The new nature which God implants in every Believer at the time he is born again is incapable of sin—it cannot sin, for it is born of God! That new nature is the offspring of the eternal Father—and the Spirit of God dwells in it, with it and strengthens

it!

It is light, it is purity, it is, according to the Scripture, the "living and incorruptible Seed which lives and abides forever." If incorruptible, it is sinless, for sin is corruption and corrupts everything that it touches. The Apostle Paul, when describing his inward conflicts, showed that he himself, his real and best self, did keep the Law, for he says, "So then with the mind I, myself, serve the Law of God" (Rom. 7:25). He consented to the Law that it was good, which showed that he was on the side of the Law. And though sin that dwelt in his members led him into transgression, yet his new nature did not allow it, but hated and loathed it, and cried out against it as one in bondage! The newborn soul delights in the Law of the Lord and there is within it a quenchless life which aspires after absolute perfection! It will never rest till it pays to God perfect obedience and comes to be like God, Himself!

This which is begun in regeneration is continued and grows till it ultimately arrives at absolute perfection. That will be seen in the world to come and oh, what a fulfillment of the Law will be there! The Law will admit no man to Heaven till he is perfectly conformed to it—but every Believer shall be in that perfect condition! Our nature shall be refined from all its dross and be as pure gold! It will be our delight in Heaven to be holy. There will be nothing about us, then, to kick against a single Commandment of God! We shall know, there, in our own hearts the Glory and excellency of the Divine will and our will shall run in the same channel. We shall not imagine that the precepts are rigorous—they will be our own will as truly as they are God's will!

Then nothing which God has commanded, however much of self-denial it requires, now, will require any self-denial from us! Holiness will be our element, our delight! Our nature will be entirely conformed to the Nature and mind of God as to holiness and goodness—and then the Law will be fulfilled in us and we shall stand before God, having washed our robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb! And, at the same time, being ourselves without spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing! Then shall the Law of the Lord have eternal honor from our immortal being. Oh, how we shall rejoice in it! We delight in it after the inward man, now, but then we shall delight in it as to our risen bodies which shall be charmed to be instruments of righteousness unto God forever and ever! No appetite of those risen bodies, no want and no necessity of them shall then lead the soul astray, but our whole body, soul and spirit shall be perfectly conformed unto the Divine mind!

Let us long and pant for this! We shall never attain it except by believing in Jesus. Perfect holiness will never be reached by the works of the Law, for works cannot change the nature. But by faith in Jesus and the blessed work of His Holy Spirit, we shall have it and then, I believe, it will be among our songs of Glory that Heaven and earth pass away, but the Word of God and the Law of God shall stand fast forever and ever. Hallelujah! Hallelujah! Amen.